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# Conference Report U.S.-India Maritime Cooperation A Track-Two Dialogue

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## *Conference Report*

# U.S.-India Maritime Cooperation: A Track-Two Dialogue

*Organized by the Center for Contemporary Conflict, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and the National Maritime Foundation*

*New Delhi, India, 18 September 2007*

by Dr. Peter Lavoy and Mr. Robin Walker

## Executive Summary

On 18 September 2007 more than 70 senior policymakers, scholars, and active duty and retired military officers from the United States and India gathered in New Delhi to discuss future maritime cooperation between the United States and India. The conference was sponsored by the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Advanced Systems and Concepts Office and organized by the Center for Contemporary Conflict (CCC) and India's National Maritime Foundation (NMF).

The conference built on another track-two dialogue, the *U.S.-India Strategic Partnership: A Track-Two Dialogue for Long-Term Cooperation*,[1] held in New Delhi in April 2007, and sought to identify specific areas of cooperation in the maritime realm, including the role of India in the U.S. maritime strategy, cooperation on WMD interdiction issues, and the implications of energy security strategies for maritime conflict and cooperation in the Indian Ocean. Key points raised during the conference included:

- **U.S. supremacy.** Participants agreed that the United States will continue to be the major power in the Indian Ocean and beyond for the foreseeable future, but other countries and non-state actors have the potential to create serious security problems. It is in the U.S. interest to foster close relationships with India and other emerging powers to maintain regional and global stability.
- **China 's role in the Indian Ocean.** There was no consensus on the scope, speed, and effect of China's entry into the Indian Ocean region, but all agreed that it was an important factor that needs careful monitoring and further discussion in track-one and track-two bilateral fora.
- **Navy as a foreign policy tool.** The Indian Navy is a powerful tool for Indian foreign policy and diplomacy, a fact that is only beginning to be recognized by civilian policy makers in India.
- **Technology.** India remains very keen on gaining access to U.S. defense technology to facilitate its plans to play a larger role in the Indian Ocean region.
- **U.S.-India bilateral relations and the civilian nuclear deal.** Indian participants noted that the Bush administration's dogged effort to push the nuclear deal through earned Washington much goodwill. Even if the 123 agreement falls through and diplomatic relations temporarily plateau, each side expressed interest in still trying to upgrade military-military relations. However, cooperation between the two navies, which is

perhaps the oldest and strongest aspect of the U.S.-India partnership, cannot advance much faster without political support and real progress in the other bilateral relations.

- **U.S. bureaucratic momentum.** The United States government is very excited about the U.S.-India strategic partnership, and has begun numerous dialogues and initiatives. However, the Indian system, with many fewer agencies and individuals, is experiencing "initiative fatigue," and is having a hard time dealing with the "fire hose" of information and attention.
- **U.S. seam issues.** The United States should address some of the seam issues that affect the ongoing relationship, such as the bureaucratic defense line between U.S. Pacific Command, which includes India, and U.S. Central Command, which covers the Middle East and Pakistan.

*Dr. Peter Lavoy and RADM (retd.) Ravi Vohra*

## Introduction

The Indian organizer opened the conference by welcoming the group and challenging it to come to deeper analysis and conclusions that will serve as a way ahead for future cooperation. He identified several key points and questions that would resonate through the rest of the conference:

- The Indian Ocean is the hub of the energy trade for the oil and tankers that fuel most of the world. Ensuring that that energy trade continues unimpeded will continue to drive economic growth throughout the world, and is in India's interest.
- The United States is a disproportionately strong power in almost every sense, especially in the military maritime domain, and is likely to remain so for at least the next decade, with no other major power emerging capable of challenging the United States directly.

Nevertheless, some emerging powers have the potential to disrupt stability or cause problems. The United States should enable other countries to help maintain security in potentially volatile regions.
- China 's increasing power, intentions, and role in the Indian Ocean remain topics of much debate, but all agreed that China will be a key player in the region in the years to come.

He emphasized that the U.S.-India relationship needs to be based on transparency and shared interests. He identified a few important questions to think about when looking at where the relationship needs to go and how it should steered in that direction:

- How much information sharing should occur between the two countries particularly in the realm of maritime domain awareness?
- Does the United States want India to be a major regional power, and to enable it to help in the region?
- What are the redlines of the relationship? How far should the relationship be pushed? Which topics will be productive for dialogue and cooperation and which will be fruitless?
- Indian concerns need to be addressed.

The American organizer echoed the positive opening thoughts and summary of the situation and the challenge to the group. He stated that the formal relations between the two countries seemed to have reached a plateau, and hoped that the track-two dialogue would introduce new ideas to help jump-start formal relations. He noted that at the earlier track-two dialogue on the U.S.-India strategic partnership in April 2007, maritime cooperation was identified as one area that was a "low-hanging fruit" where progress could be made sooner rather than later, but that the specifics needed more thinking and discussion.

He noted that rather than just a Look East policy, India now has a Look East, Look West, and Look North policy. He identified a few additional themes for the conference.

- India 's civilian leadership seems to realize for perhaps the first time how useful a tool the military, and especially the navy, can be for foreign policy.
- Pakistan 's strategic doctrine is forward-leaning and designed to push any conflict toward nuclear use, which is very different from the Indian strategy and understanding of the situation. Because of the danger imposed by nuclear weapons on the subcontinent, the era of land war in South Asia is probably over. Therefore, all of the Indian military services need to find new missions, and the role of the navy is likely to increase.
- The United States embraces India as a regional power, especially as a naval power. However, the impetus for this is not balancing or containing China, but is far wider than that. India represents an alternative, independent actor in the region, allowing other countries in the region to not have to simply choose between two countries, and avoiding a new Cold War situation between the United States and China.

## Session One: Geostrategic Scenario in the Indian Ocean

The first panel was chaired by a senior Indian diplomat who noted that this exercise of exchanging views is part of a larger tradition of good dialogue, with no attempt to dismiss the other side's views. By slow degrees the two countries are gradually establishing a dialogue. Nevertheless, the history of U.S.-India relations is a history of lost decades of potential cooperation squandered.

He identified several factors shaping the geostrategic environment in the Indian Ocean:

- Energy activity is rapidly increasing in Indian Ocean region (including Asia Pacific as a whole).
- No country wants to remain backward. The region does not contain "centers of multipolarity;" however, centers of influence do exist, such as India, Japan, ASEAN, and others. U.S. domination of the region and the world is not in question, but those powers are growing in the neighborhood.
- Cooperation, harmony, interdependence, and other characteristics of globalization all on the rise in the region.
- The implications of China for U.S.-India relations are unknown, but will be crucial.
- The presumption in international relations is that trends will go back toward conflict. Will that be the case in the Indian Ocean? Who is choking the potential chokepoints in the region (such as the Straits of Malacca), besides pirates?
- The defense sectors in all countries are major consumers of energy, and need to be leaders in finding alternative sources of energy as well as in conservation.

The first speaker was a retired Indian Navy officer and a key Indian strategic thinker. He noted that Indo-U.S. maritime cooperation is about 15 years old. In the years immediately following the Cold War, little political dialogue occurred between the two countries, but the military-to-military cooperation was the best factor of the relationship, especially the cooperation between the two navies. Although navies are instruments of state policy, navy-navy cooperation can only run so far without political-military content. While the tactical complexity of joint exercises can continually be increased, such an evolution will be a dead end without the proper political-military content. He proposed re-anchoring military-to-military relationship to political-military content and context. He thought that dialogues such as this one might be a good first step in this re-anchoring, beginning with the exchange of perceptions before driving right to policy questions.

The presenter identified four geostrategic issues engaging the minds of policy people in governments:

- Political Islam is a difficult issue, and is difficult to define, but is perhaps best described using the words of al-Qaeda deputy Zawahiri's words: "where the laws of God are supreme, [and] the laws of man have no place. If you have a country like that, that is political Islam." The presenter wondered whether, with 150 million Muslims and two neighboring states with some radical Muslim elements, India can leave these problems alone and continue its nine percent growth of recent years. He stated that that question will be decided by the success or failure of political Islam in Pakistan. When autocratic governments suppress political aspirations, religious organizations are often the only outlet left. Once India could resist Islamic extremism on the Afghan frontier, but India needs Pakistan to serve as a moderate buffer state between it and political Islam. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency identifies India as a swing state in the 21 st century, but for India Pakistan is a swing state against political Islam.
- The rise of China. It is not possible to pretend that China is not a rising power; it is a major power already. Historical strategies for dealing with rising powers have included: 1) prevent its rise (something that cannot be done in this case) 2) follow the Cold War advice of U.S. policymaker George Kennan and contain the rising power (something that now cannot be done due to globalization), or 3) go along with the advice of Immanuel Kant and bring it into the system. He argued for creating coalitions, potentially including India, Japan, Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, not to counter China militarily but with an aim to induce China to accept that it must join the international system democratically. Additionally, the geography of the region will change in the next few decades due to new major highways and new pipelines.
- Precision Global Strike (PGS). The proposition of the United States working with allies and building coalitions now may be out of date due to the speed of modern wars. Is the United States preparing to go it alone with its PGS system? Indian's think differently, especially considering their experience with counterinsurgency. Their counterinsurgency

strategy is to never use air power and have lots of "boots on the ground." Is global strike a useful concept to deal with problems like we will see in coming years?

- Technology. The U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal was about removing the technology isolation imposed on India after 1974 test, the policy of a technology denial regime. The flow of technology and information cannot be intercepted anymore due to the changing nature of that information. Governments don't own technology; they can create laws to penalize companies from transferring technology, but they do not truly own it nor can they stop its flow. The unipolar status of the United States is assured for two or three decades. Perhaps technology might be part of the glue that helps bind China into a democratic coalition.

In conclusion he encouraged the group and their respective governments to bring the political-military content back to maritime cooperation.

The second presenter, an American academic and policymaker, discussed the need to add a fifth theme to the geostrategic environment: energy security, especially the growing role of India and China. He noted that China and India are not comfortable on relying on the global energy market and are pursuing more aggressive energy pursuit policies. While each side has peaceful aspirations, the competition could be a cause of concern. Indian and Chinese energy demand will triple by 2020, and the vast majority of that energy demand will be met by fossil fuels, primarily from the Persian Gulf countries. China has gone from being energy self-sufficient in 1990 to becoming the second largest oil importer in the world. Likewise, India's oil use has doubled in recent years. Pakistan has the potential to become a positive relevant force as an energy hub for the region. This could be good for India in helping to ensure its energy supply, and for Pakistan in giving it something positive to strive for and an important and productive role in the international system in the coming years. In the next fifteen years China and India will function in close proximity as they both pursue aggressive energy strategies. In the coming years it is likely that at least two navies will be active in the Indian Ocean, with the United States playing a potentially crucial balancing or tipping role in any possible flashpoints.

## Session One Discussion

In the ensuing discussion an Indian discussant noted two divergent views of China, one of them as ten feet tall and the other as two feet short. A lot of debate exists about the existence or extent of Chinese presence at many of the reported posts in the "string of pearls" in the Indian Ocean. He noted the increasing tendency of the Western media to make Indians seem ten feet tall as well, but noted that Indian actions are limited as well, and concluded that in his assessment the chance of conflict in the Indian Ocean was extremely low.

Another Indian discussant argued that the Indian presentation represented an alarmist picture of expansion of political Islam. He wondered whether India would be better served trying to use political Islam as a potential fissure to divide Pakistan.

A retired Indian naval officer noted that unknown factors in the energy arena, including undersea oil and the potential for untapped oil fields in the Arctic, could change the energy situation substantially. In response to a question from another commenter, he noted that China did not have a listening post or base on Cocos Islands. He indicated that Indian forces had been there numerous times and not seen anything of the sort.

*RADM (retd.) Raja Menon and Ambassador K. Raghunath*

The Indian panelist responded that political Islam is not a monolith. Command of al-Qaeda, like command of old Soviet army, runs through deputies and clerics, not the commanders. Zawahiri is a cleric, while Osama bin Ladin is not. The presenter further argued that India should not fiddle with mapmaking or attempt to break up Pakistan.

An American discussant asked about the assertion that if land war in South Asia is unlikely due to nuclear weapons, and the Indian and Chinese navies don't have the range to reach each other, and thus where might conflict manifest itself? Additionally, what price might India pay vis-à-vis China for getting closer to United States? Finally, would technology transfers between the United States and India help close political gaps?

The Indian presenter stated that India was embarrassed by the loss to China in 1962, and that the current officer corps was shaped by that experience. China has the equivalent of 40 divisions worth of manpower, and is restructuring those divisions for something other than a recreation of 1962, something more like Operation Iraqi Freedom. The center of gravity of a potential conflict need not be in the Himalayas now; it could take place in many other places. The Indians are not looking for a fight; they just want to make sure all exits from the Indian Ocean are covered if China comes looking for a fight in the maritime realm. The potential threat from China would change considerably if the Chinese restructured their air force to be like the USAF, with expeditionary air capability and bases on the Indian Ocean littoral.

He noted that the U.S. Navy is a political military force; the United States is what it is because of the strength of the Navy. India is not yet at that stage; the navy doesn't have the budget. Regarding technology he asked if the United States was prepared to continue to be the Lone

Ranger in the world and right all wrongs? If not they should share their capabilities a bit to enable other countries to share that burden.

The American presenter argued that the Chinese are realists who recognize that a capability could be a threat, and want to be ready just in case.

## Session Two: Maritime Strategy

The second session was chaired by a retired Indian naval officer and focused on maritime strategies.

The first presenter was an American academic, who discussed three issues related to U.S.-Indian maritime cooperation:

- The U.S. maritime strategy: what it is, how it relates to India, and the process by which it was created;
- The effect of the maritime strategy on Indo-U.S. maritime relations;
- Possible futures.

He first discussed the creation of the new U.S. maritime strategy, which will be released in fall 2007 and which examines the role of the U.S. Navy in the next 10-15 years. The new U.S. maritime strategy became necessary because of the changing nature of the international system. With the end of the Cold War, the role of the US Navy is no longer as simple as winning fleet battles in order to win wars. The presenter noted the new strategy is not just a naval strategy, but rather a true maritime strategy signed off on by the commandants of the Coast Guard and Marines as well.

He identified two ways to look at maritime strategy, discussing objectives (including defending the integrity of the supply chain, alleviating sources of regional stability, and countering extremists and enemies), and a more traditional military concept (defense of the homeland, deter and if necessary defeat enemies, foster relationships that strengthen trust).

The presenter identified key strategic assumptions of what the Navy does and how, including:

- Globalization is critical to world order and prosperity.
- The world has rising powers and regional powers, including China and India, but currently no existential threat to United States or the international order.
- Asymmetric, non-state threats and proliferation will continue to be concerns.
- Oil, and especially Persian Gulf oil, will continue to be important.

The authors of the new maritime strategy followed certain guidelines, including a “back-to-first-principles” approach, a recognition that any new maritime strategy must conform to higher-level strategies, and an emphasis on an open and inclusive process, including not only other military services but also the public.

The next steps for the maritime strategy include discussions with international partners, and the presenter emphasized that the strategy is not set in stone, and is an iterative process. The United States does not want to (and cannot) create stability by itself, and views India as a key partner.

Indo-U.S. relations have been on autopilot—evolving in a generally favorable direction, but with little positive guidance beyond relatively vague general pronouncements. Both India and the United States may want to advance the relationship more rapidly, depending on the future world and threat scenario. How does this affect the Indian Ocean? Indian commentators have noted

that the United States has traditionally had a “two-ocean strategy” in the Atlantic and Pacific. The U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean, however, is complicated by the more limited U.S. experience in the region, the large number of both potential partners and adversaries bordering the region, and the fact that the Indian Ocean now shares boundaries with four separate U.S. commands (AFRICOM, EUCOM, PACOM, CENTCOM).

The presenter identified a few questions that may help determine where the Indo-U.S. maritime relations go from here:

- The United States wants to know what India’s maritime strategy is.
- What do we mean by interoperability?
- What will the division of labor for the two countries and navies be?

The United States and India share many common interests, including stability in the region, good order at sea, and a continued flow of commerce. A growing common concern may be emerging in crisis management, including disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, but also including more military missions such as offshore platform defense, escort of maritime traffic in contested waters, and interdiction. However, some difficulties exist, since the United States and India have differing policies on China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, all key players in the region.

He concluded by briefly discussing how major maritime powers have created cooperative relationships with rising naval powers in the past. In some circumstances, the pace of navy-to-navy cooperation was more accelerated than the development of political relationships (although never exceeding the bounds of political oversight)—and this represents an opportunity for the two navies to help shape the emerging Indo-U.S. relationship today. He stressed the need to take advantage of this period of good relations to position both India and the United States for greater cooperation in the event that a major threat emerges outside the 10-15 year window of the new maritime strategy.

The second speaker was a retired Indian naval officer, who discussed India’s maritime strategy. The roots of India’s maritime strategy came from a strong desire to produce a doctrine, and one was released in 2004, and a full maritime strategy, *Freedom of the Seas: India’s Maritime Strategy*, followed a few years later, and is scheduled to have a declassified version, released soon.

The strategy sought to challenges certain perceptions of the Indian navy: that it is a “Cinderella service” subject to fluctuations of budget, that India has no need for a navy other than to demonstrate its greatness, and that the Indian navy first acquires hardware and then figures out how to use it. Now it would be more apt to look toward macroeconomics as a dominant force and driver of India’s navy. The navy is about far more than winning wars now, and the Indian maritime strategy should provide the intellectual underpinning for a strategy for the years ahead.

The Indian Ocean environment contains several unique features and potential seeds of conflict. The countries surrounding the Indian Ocean contains one third of the world’s population, including both extremely rich and extremely poor countries, as well as extremists, authoritarian rule, instability, and violence, as well as countries with strong economic growth and important sea routes. Several of the world’s most volatile areas, including the Horn of Africa, the Bay of Bengal, and the Straits of Malacca, are also in the region.

The presenter identified several key themes for India’s maritime strategy:

- The United States must be counted as a regional player because of its presence. India’s view of U.S. interests in the region include:
    - Safeguarding energy resources;

    - Containment of China and protection of Taiwan;
    - Combating militant Islam.

However, the United States is showing signs of overstretch, may need a radical new approach, such as the "1,000-ship navy," which strikes the right note.

- Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean is both positive and negative. While China is on its way to becoming India's largest trading partner, it still has territorial disputes with India, and is viewed as a threat that may be encircling India through support to surrounding South Asian countries, building a port facility in Gwadar, Pakistan, and nuclear support to Pakistan.
- Pakistan is still viewed as a threat and a factor, but India cannot afford to let it dominate the radarscope. Even considering notions like the "clash of civilizations" is counterproductive. While it is in India's interest to have a stable Pakistan, India should be able to send Pakistan two messages:
    - India has vast resources of strength and resilience to withstand whatever Pakistan can throw at it. An arms race would break Pakistan's back.
    - India will continue its march of progress no matter what Pakistan does.

The dual responsibility of the Indian navy is to secure own wellbeing, and ensure the free flow of hydrocarbons and commerce through the Indian Ocean.

The Indian maritime doctrine released in 2004 highlights four traditional roles:

- Military/strategic, including the recent acquisition of an underwater launch capability (submarine launched ballistic missiles), designed to leave no doubt about India's capability in the sea.
- Political, serving as an element of Indian diplomatic and foreign policy. It helps diplomatic relations if the navy has friendly relations with a country, and India has understandings regarding port calls with around twenty-five countries.
- Constabulary, policing the sea-lanes and ensuring the free flow of commerce.
- Benign, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and recovery.

In India, a shift in doctrine has occurred from conventional combat to include non-traditional threats. These could include cutting off trade or embargoes, as well as the traditional role of directly attacking. In conclusion he stated that Indian maritime strategy is one whose time has come, and that trade and energy are inextricably linked with India's maritime power.

## Session Two Discussion

In the ensuing discussion an Indian scholar asked about the security perceptions of states in the Indian Ocean, and about the justification for a for holding joint amphibious exercise with the United States.

Another Indian discussant asked how the five million Indian workers in the Persian Gulf states figure into Indian priorities. If a crisis happened in one of those countries, how could the United States help?

The American presenter responded that navy-to-navy cooperation should be concerned with policy in mind. The Indians and the United States must be to the possibility of damaging relations with other states in the region. It is entirely possible that the exercise was scheduled out of convenience, rather than implying some broader cooperative threat or message to any regional state. On the second question he noted that the United States is friendly with most countries with

large Indian populations, including those in the Gulf. In the event of a crisis in one of those countries, U.S. efforts to extract people might be viewed as something less benign, so India might be better off doing it on their own. In a scenario such as that, it might not do India any good to be seen as on the side of the United States.

*Admiral (retd.) Arun Prakash and Professor Timothy Hoyt*

The Indian presenter echoed the response, saying the amphibious nature of the exercise was just one more capability to practice in an exercise and was not targeted or intended against any specific country.

An Indian discussant asked whether military cooperation between the two countries would fall apart if the civilian nuclear deal fell through.

The Indian presenter stated that the military-military relations were extremely positive before the nuclear deal and would continue to be regardless of the outcome of the deal, stating, “let’s not hitch our wagons to the diplomatic efforts.” The American presenter remarked that one perception he got from the track-two event in April was that the most important part of the 123 nuclear deal was the gesture itself, and that the actual deal wasn’t as important as the effort to make it happen.

A retired Indian naval officer asked how Indians could convince their bosses that the navy should be a more major tool of foreign policy?

The American presenter answered that the strategic partnership has generated a lot of bureaucratic momentum on the U.S. side, which may be somewhat overwhelming for Indians. The United States should undergo more off-the-books efforts to smooth the way and figure out what can be discussed and potentially ease the friction.

The Indian presenter answered that progress has been made in this area, and that bureaucrats in India are now asking why the navy has not grown faster.

## Keynote Address

A senior American policymaker delivered a few remarks for the group. He stated that he was very relaxed about the trends in the U.S.-India relationship, noting that even if the 123 nuclear deal fails the underlying momentum has pushed the relationship past the tipping point toward good relations. The natural relationship started in the early 1990s, but the naval-naval relationship started in the 1980s and continues in a creative, recurrent fashion that brings in outsiders as needed (the most recent Malabar exercise brought in five countries) and is the most relaxed and permissive portion of the relationship. He stated his personal belief that the United States does best when it remains an offshore power, something it has done successfully in the Indian Ocean.

He echoed the statements of earlier presenters, stating that the question of China as a rising power is being sensibly approached. Some members of the U.S. Congress view India as a natural and automatic chess piece the United States can use against a rising China, which is both arrogant and shortsighted. He noted that several proposals for closer cooperation were waiting on action from South Block, and asked the gathered participants to encourage South Block to act. He concluded with a few takeaway points for the group's consideration:

- American diplomacy has a tendency to announce an initiative and see how many countries sign up for it. A better policy would be to see where benefits overlap or converge with other countries and then act.
- The United States needs help in thinking about some of the seam issues, such as the line between U.S. Pacific Command (PACCOM), which includes India, and U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), which includes the Middle East and Pakistan.
- The United States and India need to think out what we want in the maritime domain in the Indian Ocean.
- We should be careful in thinking that there is a sole superpower in the world; the United States is not immune from trends that can cause us damage.
- The United States should return to looking at interests, especially convergent interests, and working on issues where those interests are aligned.

An Indian discussant noted that the current period is the worst possible time to get help from Parliament because so many people in the Indian government are running scared from anything to do with the United States due to electoral pressure.

Another Indian discussant argued that India and the United States do not have convergent views; they occasionally have corresponding views.

## Session Three: WMD Interdiction Cooperation

A retired Indian military officer and academic chaired third session.

The first presenter was an Indian academic, who discussed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and efforts to counter it. She stated that between 1945 and 2000 proliferation challenges and were more traditional in nature—vertical and horizontal proliferation—and treaty arrangements and export controls were the primary tools to try to stop it. New sources of proliferation are far more diffused and diverse, and the responses need to be as well, especially trying to plug gaps in the nonproliferation regime. She encouraged the nonproliferation regime, and the United States in particular, to place as much emphasis on nonproliferation as it currently does on counterproliferation.

Recent measures that attempt to combat WMD proliferation have included the container security initiative (CSI) in January 2002, the GNEP/NGPI/Fuel Bank in 2003, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) from 2003, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 in April 2004, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in July 2006, and the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (known as the 1,000-ship navy) proposed in 2007. All reflect the current U.S. approach to homeland security, focusing on national export controls and port and border security. She emphasized the need for cooperation, especially capacity building, intelligence sharing, communication about best practices and training, all of which will result in intangible payoffs, including confidence building and the common benefit of global security.

The presenter identified challenges to interdiction cooperation, including legal concerns; operational concerns (such as command of operations and intra- and inter-state coordination); practical problems (bureaucracies, the difficulty of intelligence sharing, and the dichotomy between secrecy and transparency); the political limits of support for the program; and attitudinal issues, primarily the resistance to the program being led by the United States and the challenges of commercial opportunities versus security.

Specifically regarding India and interdiction cooperation, the presenter stated that India and the United States have a commonality of interests, and that India has been a long-standing victim of terrorism and a witness to past and potential future regional proliferation. She argued that India has had consistent support for nonproliferation, including implementation of UNSCR 1540, but that it had concerns with the Container Security Initiative (CSI) and Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Indian concerns with CSI include political issues, the fact that India is uncomfortable with U.S. inspectors in Indian ports, the mandated use of only American equipment, and concerns over time delays and commercial losses. Indian concerns with PSI include the lack of legal or United Nations sanction, again the fact that it is U.S.-led, problems with the protocols to the SUA Convention, operational concerns, a mismatch of proliferation concerns, a potential limit India's primacy over the Indian Ocean, and a difference in approach to nonproliferation.

India is not new to interdiction, and has conducted individual interdictions in the past. India has cooperated with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Regional Radiological Security Partnership, and with the United States under a bilateral agreement of interdiction under the defense framework. The possibility of India's participation in PSI remains depending on shared objectives, a flexible coalition and on a case-by-case basis. She argued for the critical need to refine each country's intelligence gathering and sharing, and to emphasize the inefficacy of interdiction in the absence of other nonproliferation measures.

The second presenter, an American academic, discussed WMD interdiction in the maritime realm as an example of maritime cooperation, and specifically mentioned the difference between interdicting actual nuclear, chemical, biological, or radiological weapons and interdicting dual-use components of WMD and delivery systems. Interdicting weapons has a long history under the legal and policy justification of self-defense, but has taken on a renewed urgency and focus on non-state actors after the September 11 th terrorist attacks.

Interdiction of weapons in the United States is explored in two policy documents and related policies and processes: the 2005 National Strategy for Maritime Security included WMD as a key element along with counterterrorism, criminal activities, piracy, and defense of the United States and U.S. global interests, while the Maritime Operational Threat Response process identified gaps and seams in interagency capabilities to stop WMD. Interdiction concepts for dual-use components of WMD arose in parallel with various nonproliferation regimes, and interest increased following proliferation shocks, including public revelations about the activities of the A. Q. Khan network.


*Professor Andrew Winner and Air Commodore (retd.) Jasjit Singh*

The basic concept of dual-use interdiction particularly under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is that a group of like-minded sates will be more aggressive in interdicting WMD, WMD components and missile delivery systems (including dual-use items) while they are being transported by sea, air, or land. The PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles was signed by eleven initial participants on September 4, 2003, but is viewed as an activity, not a formal organization. Activities for interdiction include everything from training exercises and games to boarding agreements, increased political will and domestic legal authorities, and new related initiatives enhancing export control laws.

Interdiction is aimed at deterring proliferation and raising the cost of doing so, forcing proliferators to rethink or change their modes of operation. This is a dual-edged sword, since known practices and patterns are more easily detected and avoided. The denial requirements are extremely high, due to the time-sensitive nature of intelligence, varying interpretations of the urgency of cargo at hand, especially regarding dual-use items, and the difficulty of various transportation methods.

The presenter argued that the principles of the interdiction statement are worthwhile, but that the specifics matter since targets can change their methods so easily. Interdiction efforts are more effective against state programs than against terrorist or non-state actors trying to obtain WMD. Policy-level and interagency coordination will be far more difficult than developing operational capabilities. The potential sticking points include intelligence-sharing, interpretations over the severity of violations, finding or developing a legal rationale for each case, and possible regional repercussions. The role of maritime forces in interdiction includes maritime domain awareness, so ships can be tracked; law enforcement actions, including by the navy, coast guard, and maritime police; and boardings where no port options exist.

He concluded by saying that the major issue at hand is the question of dual-use items. Additionally, the vast majority of interdiction operations will take place in ports, not at sea, and efforts are needed to encourage port states' legal authorities to take care of legal barriers.

## Session Three Discussion

In the discussion an Indian commenter argued that India has not just been a witness to proliferation, it has been a victim. If Pakistani weapons came by sea it would have been in India's interest to even initiate something like PSI in years past.

An Indian discussant stated that the problem is not with the principles of PSI; the problem is in developing the legal authority for interdiction activities.

Another Indian asked whether a secret PSI would have worked. Although it would not have a deterrent value it could have proved more successful. He asked whether any country failed to stop a suspected ship passing by, and thus whether a formal PSI is really necessary.

The American presenter stated that enacting national laws is a big part of PSI (developing "international and national frameworks"), and argued that being publicized is a good thing, because it serves as a strategic communications method.

An Indian discussant pointed out the need for international laws as well as national laws. He asked whether India get shared intelligence through PSI? He finally wondered whether India would actually stop a suspected Chinese ship, and noted that different worldviews matter, and that factor might hold India back from participating in PSI.

A retired Indian military officer pointed out that for 40 years India has been a target of nonproliferation efforts, and is now being asked to be a part of those efforts, which will take time for everyone to get used to. He pointed out that the world has any nonproliferation measures that have not gone anywhere, such as the CTBT. The nonproliferation regime has many flaws, but the international community does not seem to want to correct those flaws. Finally, he wondered whether there be more or less faith in India in PSI if the 123 nuclear agreement does not go through.


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## Concluding Session

In the concluding session the American organizer stated that the gaps on maritime issues are smaller than generally perceived. He noted that the value of the conference was in the type of

recommendations for the government, and that the findings of the conference can help shape future good ideas at both the track-one and track-two levels.

The Indian organizer offered some concluding points:

- There has to be an exchange of perceptions, what each side thinks, where the meeting points are. If the two countries' interests are not meeting, they should at least go parallel, and not clash.
- The flow of technology needs to open up in order to make India a useful partner.
- Energy flow through the Indian Ocean could cause a potential future clash.
- The United States and India need to talk strategy at various levels, not just at the track-two level.
- Is low political visibility of interdiction efforts a good thing?
- India needs more inputs for its maritime strategy document.
- Gaps need to be plugged as far as WMD interdiction, particularly for air or land transportation. Even after we knew things were happening in Pakistan nothing was done, and A. Q. Khan should have been made an example of in order to discourage potential imitators.

## References


1. Conference report available at: http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2007/Jun/lavoy2Jun07.asp